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# The Sweetser Family of Maryland

BY

LESTER DURAND GARDNER

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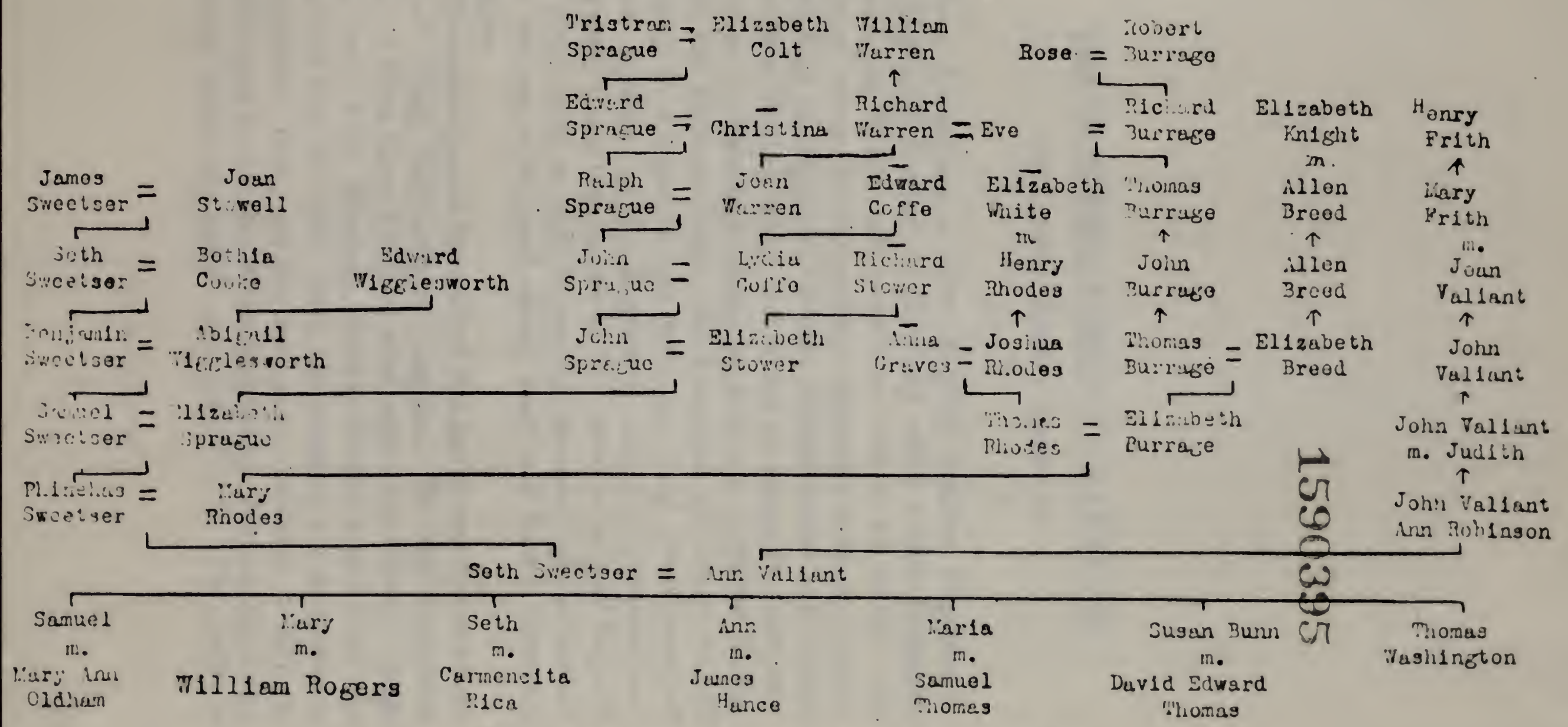


Geneology of Seth Sweetser of Annapolis and Baltimore, Md.

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# THE SWEETSER FAMILY OF MARYLAND.

By Lester Durand Gardner.

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Many descendants of New England families migrated in the Eighteenth Century to Maryland where a more temperate climate and better trade conditions were to be found. Seth Sweetser, whose Puritan ancestry embraced such well known families as the Spragues, Breeds, Wigglesworths and Rhodes came from Malden, Mass., and settled at Annapolis, later moving near to Baltimore where he built the Sweetser Bridge across the Patapsco River. His home and toll house are still standing at Linthicum, the home and land development of several members of the Linthicum family, his descendants. This study traces the ancestry of Seth Sweetser in New England and gives, as far as could be learned, the record of his descendants who are to be found among many well known Maryland families.

The earliest known Sweetser of this family was James Sweetser of Tring, Hertfordshire, England. He was apparently married three times, his third wife being Jane Stowell. Their issue were John, Elizabeth, James, Benjamin and *Seth* who was born May 18, 1605. Seth, the youngest son emigrated to Charlestown, Mass., and was listed as an inhabitant in 1637 and at that time he was one of the proprietors. He was listed as a freemen, March 14, 1638-9; constable, Jan. 3, 1652; sealer of

leather, Jan. 2, 1653 and surveyor of highways, Jan. 2, 1659. He owned a ten acre lot on the Mystic River. On Jan. 31, 1630, he was married to Bethia Cooke and later, in April, 1661, to Elizabeth Oakes. His children with Bethia Cooke were *Benjamin,* Sarah, Mary, Hannah, Elizabeth and Anna.

Benjamin (James, Seth) Sweetser was baptised Dec. 7, 1633 at Tring. He died on July 22, 1718 and was buried in the Phipps Street Burying Ground, Charlestown, Mass. He married Abigail Wigglesworth (see note at end of article). Benjamin Sweetser served in King Phillips War (*N. E. Hist. Reg.,* Vol. 43, pp. 271, 354). He served under Lieut. John Floyd and received an allowance for his family while he was away. He was admonished and fined £10 by the General Court of Mass. in 1671 for circulating a petition to have three Baptists released from prison. His deed to property and Will are given in Wyman, "Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown, Mass.," p. 921. Issue: Abigail, Bethia, Benjamin, Seth, Joseph, *Samuel,* Wigglesworth.

Samuel (James, Seth, Benjamin) Sweetser, b. Nov. 1, 1673 at Charlestown, Mass., d. July 18, 1757 at Malden, Mass. He married Elizabeth Sprague (see note). Issue: Elizabeth, Abigail, Samuel, John, Jacob, Michael, Joseph, Lydia, Stephen, *Phinehas,* Mary. It is the descent of Phinehas from Samuel that has given much trouble as his name is omitted from the list of children of Samuel given by Wyman on p. 921 referred to above.

Phinehas (James, Seth, Benjamin, Samuel) Sweetser, b. Sept. 10, 1718 at Malden, Mass. and d. Sept. 24, 1764 at Stoneham, Mass. His Bible giving the dates of his birth and death and the births and deaths of his Children has been presented by Dr. G. Milton Linthicum of Baltimore to the Maryland Historical Society for its collection of Maryland genealogies. Phinehas married Mary Rhodes (see note). Issue: Elizabeth, Samuel, Thomas, Phinehas, Mary, Elizabeth, *Seth,* Johanna.

A comprehensive history of the Sweetser Family is being

prepared by Mr. Philip Sweetser of Waban, Mass., and when it is completed it will give all that is known of the entire family. He writes about the descent of Phinehas from Samuel Sweetser as follows: "Phinehas was buried in the Old Burying Ground at Stoneham, Mass. According to the gravestone inscription he died in his 46th year and married, Sept. 10, 1747 Mary Rhodes of Lynn, Mass., daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (Burrage) Rhodes. Search of the town or church records has failed to disclose any record of his birth. His name is not mentioned in his father's will, dated Sept. 28th, 1752, nor can any deed be found with him as grantee or grantor. There is nothing in the official records to establish his parentage. Eaton in "History of Reading, Mass.," p. 341 states that Phinehas 'lived on the Pierce Farm now so-called in Stoneham and was the brother of Michael Sweetser who lived where Asa N. Sweetser now lives'. Private records have also been located in two separate branches of Phinehas' descendants."

"The covers of Phinehas Sweetser's own Bible which come down from Elizabeth Sweetser contain a complete record of Phinehas' family. The fact that this record states that Phinehas was born in 'Maltin' (Malden) is excellent corroboration that he was the son of Samuel. The record of his birth is not shown as the page is torn but his descendants give it as Sept. 10, 1718."

"The other family record of Phinehas was located in the possession of Prof. Ephraim Emerton of Cambridge, Mass., (retired Harvard Professor) whose grandmother was Hannah Sweetser, daughter of Samuel of Salem and granddaughter of Phinehas. This record states: 'A copy of the Family Record of Samuel Sweetser of Salem. Samuel Sweetser was born in Lynn and was the oldest son of Phinehas Sweetser who died in Stoneham in 1764 in the 46th year of his age. Said Phinehas was the youngest son of my grandfather Samuel Sweetser of Malden which the name of Sweetser sprang from.' Although evidence from official sources is lacking, the evidence from these sources definitely establishes the parentage of Phinehas beyond all doubt."

Seth Sweetser, son of Phinehas, moved to Annapolis as stated at the beginning of this article. He was born at Stoneham, Mass., June 5, 1762 and died July 19, 1828. He married, Nov. 9, 1790, Ann Valliant, b., Royal Oak, Talbot Co., Md. Dec. 11, 1765; d. Sept. 10, 1823. She was the daughter of John Valliant and Ann Robinson of Royal Oak and granddaughter of John Valliant of Tred Avon formerly called Third Haven Creek in the Great Choptank River, Talbot Co. Will dated Jan. 13, 1721, Talbot Co. This John Valliant was the grandson of the immigrant whose history is given in *Biographical Encyclopedia of Maryland,* 1874, p. 382.

ISSUE: Seth Sweetser and Ann Valiant.

(1) Samuel Sweetser, b. Annapolis, Jan. 28, 1792; d. Jan. 8, 1881; m. May 7, 1816, Mary Ann Oldham; b. Baltimore, Aug. 3, 1793; d. Fairhaven, N. J., July 29, 1876.

(2) Mary Sweetser, b. April 7, 1793 at Annapolis; d. Dec. 29, 1873 at Baltimore; m. April 22, 1818, William Rogers, b. Aug. 14, 1794; d. Oct. 3, 1862.

(3) Seth Sweetser, b. Jan. 24, 1796; d. Sept. 13, 1848. He was in the Battle of North Point in 1814. Later in life he moved to Guayaquil, Equador, S. A., and became an exporter and partner in the firm Icaza, Sweetser & Co. He was American Consul at Guayaquil from May 5, 1834 until his death. He married Carmencita Rica and had children but a letter from the present Consul (1932) states that there are no living descendants so far as he could learn, the last son dying fifteen years ago.

(4) Ann Sweetser, b. Feb. 10, 1798, d. 1882; m. James Hance b. 1786, d. 1865, an Old Defender of Baltimore.

(5) Elizabeth Sweetser, b. Aug. 23, 1800; d. Dec. 22, 1875; m. William Linthicum. For issue, see *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Sept. 1930, p. 281.

(6) Thomas Washington Sweetser, b. Sept. 5, 1802; d. Aug. 5, 1803.

(7) Maria, b. June 11, 1804; m. Samuel Thomas.

(8) Susan Bunn Sweetser, b. Nov. 13, 1807; d. 1900; m. David Edward Thomas.

(9) Thomas Washington Sweetser, b. Jan. 25, 1810; d. Aug. 21, 1811.

The issue of (1) Samuel, (2) Mary, (4) Ann, (7) Maria, and (8) Susan Bunn Sweetser follow:

(1) Samuel Sweetser, son of Seth and Ann, was an "Old Defender" of Baltimore of the War of 1812. An affidavit made

by David Thomas Carter of Baltimore states that his grandmother Susan Bunn Sweetser told him the following about Samuel's service at the Battle of North Point: "Just before the battle, my brother (3) Seth who was eighteen, was drafted to aid in the defense of Baltimore. As Seth was young, my older brother (1) Sammy bought a uniform and said that he would also go along to take care of Seth. After the battle was over Seth came home but Sammy did not put in an appearance. My father, thereupon, hitched up his gig and drove to the battlefield to search for Sammy. They eventually found Sammy in a ravine with a shot wound across his mouth. Before leaving the field they picked up another wounded man, who, on account of the crowded condition of the gig, rode on the shafts. This man's name was Jesse Hunt and he afterwards became Mayor of Baltimore." Descendants of Samuel remember that he carried the bullet in his cheek until his death. The record of the services of Samuel and Seth Sweetser often appear under the names Switzer and Swetzer, variable spellings of the name. The Adjutant General of the Army in a letter to the writer dated April 3, 1931 gave the full records of the services of both in Capt. A. R. Levering's 5th Company, Maryland Militia from Sept. 7th, 1814 to Nov. 18, 1814. (See "Citizen Soldiers at North Point and Ft. McHenry", p. 33). Samuel received a pension on May 8th, 1871. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn N. Y.

ISSUE: Samuel Sweetser and Mary Ann Oldham Sweetser.

(1) John O., m. Frances Tanner; issue: Samuel Charles, Carroll.
(2) Edw. Francis.
(3) Samuel.
(4) Laura, b. Baltimore, 1825; d. Royal, France, July 31, 1905; m. John E. Forbes, d. Oct. 5, 1864, age 52; issue: 1. Lelia S., b. Dec. 20, 1847, d. May 28, 1930; m. John McKesson, Jr. and had Irving, Donald, Berkley, Grover, John, Clifford; 2. Cora S., m. Arnold C. Saportas; 3. Laura S., m. Geo. Temple Mayo; 4. John E., m. Bertha E. Tompkins; 5. Louise E., m. Julius F. Buchler; 6. Samuel S.
(5) Eleanor, d. circ. 1852, m. John Bishop; issue: 1. Eleanor S., b. 1852, d. March 7, 1909, m. Thomas E. O. Marvin.
(6) Eliza, b. 1838, d. June 18, 1888, m. Wm. J. Osborne (1837-1897); issue: 1. Louis Huber; 2. Wm. J.; 3. Lillian, m. Joseph P. Topping.

(7) Henry Clay.
(8) Ada, d. Aug. 3, 1902, age 70.
(9) Victoria, b. Philadelphia. Pa., July 15, 1838, d. Nov. 16, 1921, m. Orville Oddie (b. Aug. 1833); issue: 1. Fred; 2. Orville; 3. Albert; 4. Victoria Adelaide, b. March 24, 1868, d. June 21, 1911, m. Ivan T. Mead.

(2) Mary Sweetser married William Rogers a merchant of Baltimore and lived there all her life. She and her husband and children are buried in the Rogers Vault at Green Mount Cemetry, Baltimore.

Issue: Mary Sweetser Rogers and William Rogers.

(1) Eliza Ann, b. April 5, 1819, d. Dec. 6. 1885; m. May 28, 1839, Borius Fahnestock Gardner, b. York Springs, Pa., April 19, 1808. d. Jan. 28, 1885; issue: 1. William R., b. Sept. 28, 1840, d. Feb. 2, 1900, m. July 2, 1883, Ella McNeal; 2. Helen, b. Aug. 8, 1842, d. Dec. 12, 1854; 3. Theodore, b. July 20, 1844. d. Dec. 12, 1880, m. Agnes Stoddard; 4. Amelia, b. April 17, 1846, d. Dec. 31, 1852; 5. Mary Joseba, b. Nov. 10, 1848, d. Jan. 3, 1853; 6. Harry, b. Feb. 12, 1851, d. May 3, 1922, m. (1) Nov. 2, 1874 Frances Scott of Ironton, O. and had Lester Durand Gardner (see Who's Who in America); m. (2) Minnehaha Hawthorne and had Lawrence; 7. Elizabeth, b. May 17, 1853, m. Dr. David M. A. Culbreth; 8. Charles, b. Sept. 18, 1855. d. Feb. 24, 1914, m. (1) Sarah Frank; m. (2) Marion Miller; 9. Mary R. b. Sept. 9, 1858, d. April 30, 1862; 10. Anna Roberts. b. Dec. 2, 1861, d. May 5, 1924, m. Dec. 2, 1884, Albert Marburg; 11. John Buckler, b. May 18, 1864, d. Aug. 1864.
(2) Amelia, b. July 15, 1821, d. March 8, 1846; m. Robert Wesley Dryden; issue: 1. Meredith; 2. Mary, m. Thomas Kensett; 3. Annie, m. John R. Kensett and had 1. John, 2, Mary who m. W. H. Dempsey.
(3) James, b. 1828, d. 1883.
(4) Charles, b. Nov. 8, 1832, d. April 24, 1863.
(5) Philip, b. Aug. 14, 1835, d. Jan. 7, 1889.
(6) Henry, b. June 8, 1840, d. Feb. 21, 1875.
(7) Sarah, d. July 28, 1877, m. Phillip Hiss.
(8) Jacob, d. Oct. 4, 1862.
(9) Seth.
(10) William.

(4) Ann Sweetser married James Hance,

Issue:

(1) Seth m. Eliza Kirk, issue, Frank.
(2) Ann S. d. s. p.
(3) James, Jr., d. s. p.
(4) Maria S., m. (1) Thomas Anderson Dorsey of Baltimore; issue: 1. Rev. James Owen Dorsey, b. Oct. 31. 1848. d. Feb. 4. 1895. an

ethonologist and authority on the American Indian language, m. April 18, 1876, Clara Virginia Wynkoop and had Virginia, b. 1880, m. Jas. Herndon Lightfoot; 2. Thomas Anderson, Jr., m. Bettie Claybaugh and had George B. and Lawrence A.; m. (2) Leven Stanforth of Calvert Co., Md.

(5) Sarah S., d. s. p.

(6) Christina Virginia, m. Henry Allnut.

(7) Maria Sweetser married Samuel Thomas, a widower with three children.

Issue:

(1) Mary Rogers, m. Nikolas Brice Medairy (Madeira), issue: 1. Cora m. Percy Guard; 2. Samuel Thomas; 3. Edwin; 4. Anna Louise, m. Robert Lucas Chamberlaine.

(2) Anna Maria, m. Rev. Charles W. Baldwin.

(3) Amelia S.

(8) Susan Bunn Sweetser married David Edward Thomas,

Issue:

(1) Florence, m. John M. Carter; issue: 1. John M. Jr.; 2. Mable; 3. David E. T.; 4. Mary Christine m. Herbert Bagg and had Herbert B. Jr.

(2) Mary Rogers, m. Charles Green Summers; issue: 1. Charles G. Jr. m. ~~Anna Strand McAuley~~; 2. Walter Penrose m. Grace Hubbard; 3. Grace, m. David Hays Stevenson.

(3) Grace, d. young.

The General Society of the War of 1812 have accepted the service of Seth and Samuel Sweetser of Baltimore, sons of Seth of Annapolis and all descendants are eligible to membership. The following ancestors of Seth Sweetser of Annapolis have been accepted by the Society of Colonial Wars for their colonial war service and all his descendants are eligible to Colonial patriotic societies under their service: Ralph Sprague, John Sprague, (1624-1682), John Sprague, (1651-1703), Benjamin Sweetser, Thomas Burrage, Henry Rhodes.

As the foregoing was prepared almost entirely from family records, the compiler will be glad to receive corrections and additions to be placed with the original papers in the New York Geneological and Biographical Society.

## References and Notes.

*Sweetser Family.*

For those who wish to refer to the original sources on the Sweetser Family the following references are given: "Pioneers of Mass.," Pope, p. 443; "Old Charlestown", Sawyer, p. 368. The Will of Seth Sweetser, I, has been photostated and is to be found in the Sweetser Family collection in the library of the N. Y. Genealogical and Biographical Society, 122 East 58th St., New York. This collection contains a large number of letters and photostats from which much of the material in this article has been taken. The library is open to the public. "Stoneham Vital Records," p. 65; Bodge, "Soldiers of King Philips War", pp. 232-4; "Genealogy of the Wells Family" by G. W. W. Cushing, gives sketch of the Sweetser Family; "History of Charlestown, Mass.," p. 87; *New England Hist. Reg.,* Vol. 18, p. 29; Vol. 54, p. 356, Vol. 43, p. 276.

*Wigglesworth Family.* 1590395

For Abigail Wigglesworth, dau. of Edward Wigglesworth of New Haven, see "Genealogy of the Wells Family" by Cushing, p. 169; *New England Hist. Reg.,* Vol. 17, 1863, p. 130; "Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown," Wyman, p. 1029; "History of New Haven", Atwater, p. 531; *New England Hist. Reg.,* Vol. 18, p. 29, Vol. 2, 1857, pp. 110-11, "Certain Comeovers" by W. H. Crapo, Vol. 2, p. 689.

*Rhodes Family.*

For the genealogy of Mary Rhodes, b. March 4, 1727, d. March 27, 1813 who m. Phinehas Sweetser see *Lynn Vital Statistics,* Vol. I; "History of Lynn," A. Lewis, pp. 190, 281-2, 293; "Colonial Families of America", Rhoades, p. 394-5; "Society of Colonial Wars" 1922, p. 396. She was descended from Henry Rhodes who was Representative of the General Court of Mass. and served in King Philips War. Mary Rhodes' mother was Elizabeth Burrage who was descended from the

Burrage and Breed Families. For Burrage Family, see "The Burrage Memorial", by Alvah Burrage, 1877, p. 160. For Breed Family, see *Essex Antiquarian,* Vol. XI, No. 4, p. 1 and the publications of the Breed Family Association, of Lynn, Mass.

*Sprague Family.*

Samuel Sweetser m. Elizabeth Sprague, b. 1676, d. March 12, 1572. For a complete history of her ancestry see "The Sprague Family of Malden, Mass.," by Chamberlain. Two of her ancestors served in King Philips War.

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